



# Stewardship Network of Ontario

## SNO Squall

Premiere Issue #1  
November 2010

### WELCOME!

Welcome to the first edition of the *SNO Squall*, the eBulletin from the Stewardship Network of Ontario. To begin with we will produce two issues each year to help you to keep up with the latest developments in land stewardship across Ontario and beyond. Our hope for *SNO Squall* is that it becomes a medium for you to share your success stories with other stewardship practitioners. Has your organization reached a landmark? Initiated a new program? Implemented a new policy? Have you an inspiring story of a dedicated landowner? Please share them with your colleagues by submitting a story in advance of April 15<sup>th</sup> 2011 to [info@stewardshipcentre.on.ca](mailto:info@stewardshipcentre.on.ca)



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

The State of Ontario's Biodiversity 2010 Report and Ontario's Biodiversity Progress Report 2005-2010 were produced this year by the Ontario Biodiversity Council. These reports meet commitments made in Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy and also represent Ontario's contribution to the International Year of Biodiversity. Read and share them with others to help spread the message that biodiversity is life.

You can find the reports at <http://www.ontariobiodiversitycouncil.ca>

### What is SNO?

SNO is an informally structured umbrella organization for provincial organizations, associations and agencies with an active interest in private land stewardship in Ontario. SNO's guiding document is the Stewardship Strategy for Ontario [http://www.stewardshipcentre.on.ca/files/scnON/3241\\_Stewardship\\_Strategy\\_2007July.pdf](http://www.stewardshipcentre.on.ca/files/scnON/3241_Stewardship_Strategy_2007July.pdf). SNO is also the Stewardship Working Group for Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy and receives financial and inkind support through the Biodiversity Section of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR).



Held annually in June the SNO Forum provides an opportunity for networking and professional development for stewardship professionals. The Report of the 2010 Forum is available online [www.stewardshipcentre.on.ca/files/scnON/SNOForumFinalReport2010.pdf](http://www.stewardshipcentre.on.ca/files/scnON/SNOForumFinalReport2010.pdf)

Mark your calendar now for the 2011 Forum on June 7<sup>th</sup> at Black Creek Pioneer Village in Toronto.



## ECOLOGICAL RECOVERY PLAN

### Creating a Stronger Community-Based Conservation Partnership Across Canada

A WORKSHOP AT THE NOVEMBER 2010 LATORNELLE SYMPOSIUM

Co-Sponsored by the Stewardship Network of Ontario and Centre for Environmental Stewardship and Conservation

**About the Workshop:** Is it Canada's time to balance our ecological accounts and partner in a national Ecological Recovery Plan? There is a growing appreciation that nature's benefits result in substantial benefits to people. Other countries like Australia have invested heavily in ecological renewal planning in response to on-going biodiversity loss. The biodiversity and habitat challenges in Canada are huge and resolution will require a radical change in thinking and program delivery. An innovative Plan will guide ecological recovery and will be accomplished by harnessing the diverse energies, expertise and existing partnerships. The Ecological Recovery Plan presents a momentous opportunity to launch a new era in conservation through stewardship. The Centre for Environmental Stewardship and Conservation, working for a partnership of 11 national and provincial groups, is currently in the process of preparing an Ecological Recovery Plan for consultation. Join the Stewardship Network of Ontario and this group for a thought-provoking discussion on actions required to better protect, restore and enhance nature's benefits through partnerships that foster conservation and improve the quality of life for Canadians.

**Date, Time and Location:** The Workshop will take place between 1:00 PM and 3:00 PM, November 16, 2010. It will draw on people already planning to attend the Latornell Conservation Symposium plus additional relevant participants. The Latornell Symposium starts at 10:00AM on Wednesday November 17. The location of both this workshop and the Latornell event is the Nottawasaga Inn Convention Centre, 6015 Highway 89, Alliston, Ontario.

**Registration:** Registration is FREE and open to all organizations and individuals practising stewardship as a means of delivering conservation programs at local and regional scales. Participants should indicate they will attend the workshop so planning of an appropriately sized room is possible. Prior to the Workshop, and upon submission of your contact information, a copy of the consultation document – Canada's Ecological Recovery Plan – will be forwarded to you by e-mail. This Workshop is complimentary to, but not formally part of the Latornell Symposium. While refreshments will be provided, accommodations and food service will be individual participants' responsibility.

**How to Register:** Please register by sending an e-mail to Doug Wolthausen at [Wolthausen@sympatico.ca](mailto:Wolthausen@sympatico.ca) by later than

### *SNO Paper at Latornell 2010*

Gary Nielsen, Climate Change Project Coordinator at the Ministry of Natural Resources, will be presenting an overview of the Stewardship Network of Ontario's discussion paper entitled "*Fostering Collaboration among Stakeholders in Sustainable Landscape Planning in Southern Ontario*" at A.D. Latornell Conservation Symposium. The presentation will discuss ideas on how to move forward with the task of creating a sustainable landscape, resilient to Climate Change and supportive of the high quality of life we want to continue to enjoy in Ontario.

His session, entitled, A "*Targets and Thresholds*" Approach to Future Sustainable Landscapes, will be on Thursday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, from 8:30-10:00 am.

SNO's discussion paper can also be found on the SNO website at <http://www.stewardshipcentre.on.ca>

## *Residents Willing to Pay for Wetland Protection*

Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) has released a study entitled *Valuing Wetlands in Southern Ontario's Credit River Watershed\**, measuring the value local residents place on the wetlands in their community.

As a method of gauging just how much wetland areas are valued by residents, 1,400 survey respondents were asked whether they would be willing to accept an increase in their property taxes if it meant local wetlands could be saved or restored.

Close to half of all wetlands in the Credit River Watershed (the area of land that drains into the Credit River and its tributaries) have been lost or seriously degraded since the 1950s, largely due to human activities such as expansion of urban areas.

When presented with the facts about the role wetlands play in a healthy environment, such as protecting water quality and reducing flooding, along with facts about the continuing wetland loss in the Credit River Watershed, almost 95 per cent of respondents to the CVC survey indicated that they were concerned about the issue.

Respondents indicated they would be willing to support a hypothetical annual increase of \$229-\$259 in property tax per household

over the next five years. That represents a total current value willingness to pay estimate ranging from over \$48.6 million to over \$55 million.

"Some might be surprised at the level of commitment we found," said Mike Puddister, Director of Restoration and Stewardship for CVC. "Clearly once the public is aware of the important roles played by wetlands and the urgency of the situation, they agree that decisive action is required."

If historic trends continue, close to one-fifth of all remaining wetlands in the Credit River Watershed could be lost in the next 10 years. Based on recent research, this ongoing wetland loss has far-reaching potential effects on the Credit River, including: increased nitrogen and phosphorous, adding to algae growth and other issues; an annual increase in flooding; a significant annual release of carbon; as well as the loss of habitat for local wildlife.

CVC partnered with the Pembina Institute, with support from the Greenbelt Foundation in the preparation of this report. The study is intended as a resource for policy-makers, to help inform cost-benefit analyses and decision-making around development, wetland protection and restoration.

## *Farmers Concerned About Endangered Species Legislation*

The recent announcement that Ontario has listed the Bobolink as an endangered species has produced a concerned response from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture who contend that up to 30,000 farms may be affected. While the OFA is clear that they support the goals of environmental protection and biodiversity they express the concern that the burden falls largely on the shoulders of farmers who own most of the available habitat in southern Ontario. Bette Jean Crews, President, Ontario Federation of Agriculture writes: "If Ontario is serious about endangered species, then we must get everyone involved. Ontario needs to create new habitat." Given the findings of the CVC report cited above it is clear that taxpayers are more than willing to pay for ecological conservation. The time is ripe for our Government to act by funding new on-farm stewardship initiatives.